Adams County
Workforce Profile

Job Growth 1994 to 1999

☐	O to 9.9%
☐	10% to 19.9%
☐	20% and over
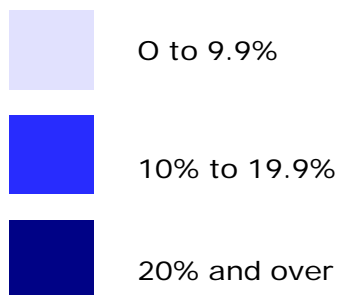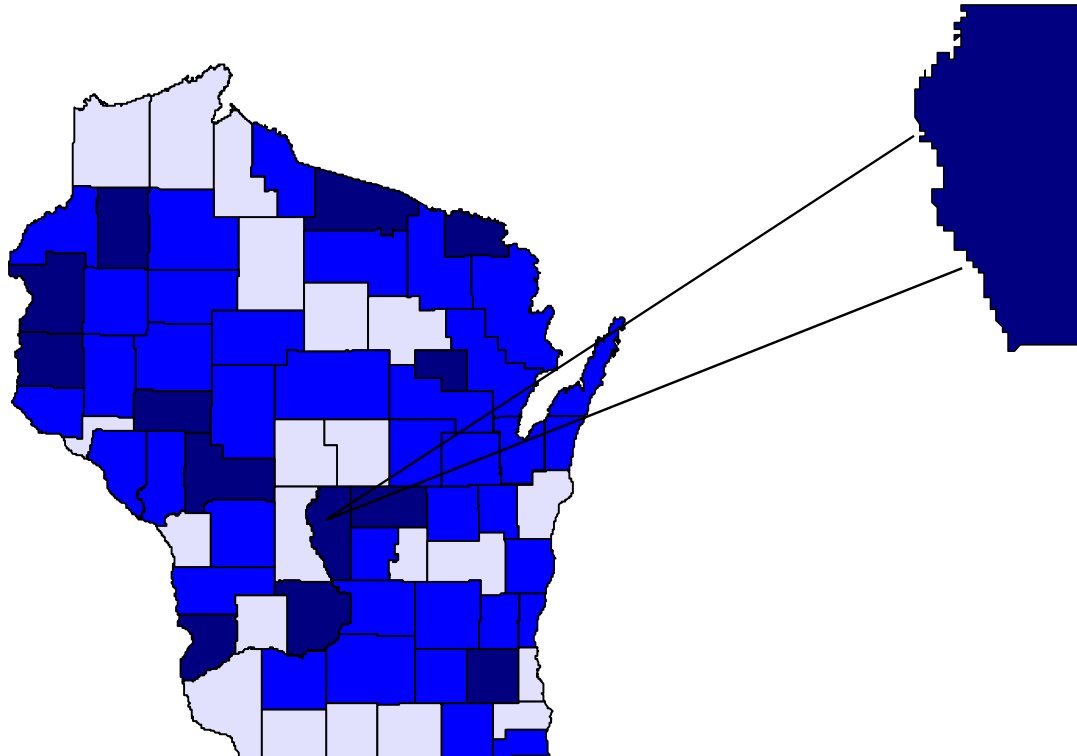
Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development
Division of Workforce Solutions
Bureau of Workforce Information
October 2001

State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development

Introduction

The County Workforce Profile has been developed by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development's (DWD) Bureau of Workforce Information (BWI) to provide a broad overview of Adams County's labor market. The data included in this fourth year of publication is for 1999 to maintain consistency with the previous publications and to provide the user with a single year of reference in order to draw comparisons and form a picture of related labor force and employment information.
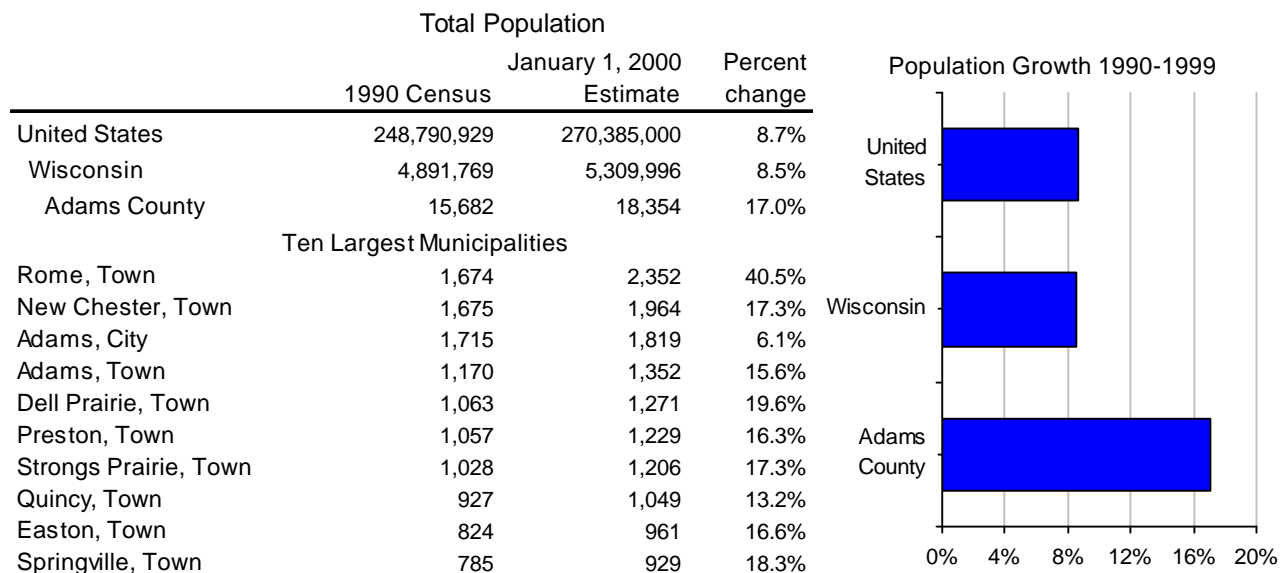
A variety of economic and demographic labor market information have been provided to describe the current labor market conditions in the counties and regions of Wisconsin. That information includes 1999 data on population, labor force, industries, employment, wages and income. The narrative describes how local conditions have changed over one-year and five-year intervals. Although population information is available from the 2000 census, it is not included in this publication since the period of time selected for all data sets is 1999. For more recent releases of information please consult the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Labor Market Information website: http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi.

For more detailed information or clarification, please contact your local labor market analyst, Dennis Goodwin, by telephone (715-261-7745) or email (goodwd@dwd.state.wi.us).

DWD is an equal opportunity service provider. If you need assistance to access services or material in an alternate format, please contact the analyst listed above.

Adams County Population and Civilian Labor Force

Adams County's population increased about 16 percent between 1990 and 2000. That rate of increase in population was faster than many other areas of the state. A quick glance at the population growth of some of the towns in the county shows healthy increases even in the smaller municipalities. The average town in the county is about 800-1,500 people. Adams County has gained a minor reputation in the last 15-20 years for being a retirement area in the central part of the state. Census figures project an increase in the older end of the population in the years to come, For example, between 1990 and 2000, Adams county saw some of the biggest jumps in the district in population for those over 40 years, the largest being 40-54 (over 48 percent). There has been a steady growth, or "spillover", of population into Adams County from Wood County, due to normal urban expansion from that direction, and this may account for some growth spurts in Adams County.
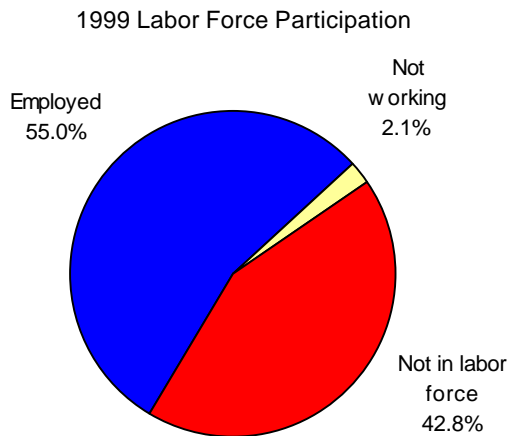
Total Population

	1990 Census	January 1, 2000 Estimate	Percent change
United States	248,790,929	270,385,000	8.7%
Wisconsin	4,891,769	5,309,996	8.5%
Adams County	15,682	18,354	17.0%
Ten Largest Municipalities			
Rome, Town	1,674	2,352	40.5%
New Chester, Town	1,675	1,964	17.3%
Adams, City	1,715	1,819	6.1%
Adams, Town	1,170	1,352	15.6%
Dell Prairie, Town	1,063	1,271	19.6%
Preston, Town	1,057	1,229	16.3%
Strongs Prairie, Town	1,028	1,206	17.3%
Quincy, Town	927	1,049	13.2%
Easton, Town	824	961	16.6%
Springville, Town	785	929	18.3%

Population Growth 1990-1999

* Adams County portion only

Source: WI Dept. of Admin., Demographic Services Center, *Official Population Estimates,* January 1, 2000

People who are not working includes people who are unemployed and people who are not in the labor force. Unemployed does not include all people who are not working. Some people who are not working are not technically unemployed. Examples of people who are not working but who are not unemployed are retirees or people who choose not to work. The number of people working in Adams County went up by about 1,100 between 1994 and 1999. As mentioned on page one, Adams County is seen as a minor retirement area. The northern portions have also gained the minor reputation of being a bedroom community of the Wisconsin Rapids-Nekoosa area (see commuting patterns, page 4).

The term used to describe the relationship between the labor force and population is "the participation rate". The 40-54 aged segment of the labor force is the fastest growing, and also the largest, running just ahead of the oldest segment of the population. But, this eldest segment is largely out of the workforce, whether voluntarily or otherwise. The middle age group tends to have the most stable and highest paying jobs, and therefore often the highest income level. This would also be true if they were retirees.

1999 Labor Force Participation

Employed 55.0%
Not working 2.1%
Not in labor force 42.8%

Source: Estimated from WI Dept of Administration population estimates, Jan 2000, US Census Bureau, and Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The rate of unemployment in Adams County in 1999 was certainly low when seen against many other areas of the state, and particularly when compared to 1994. This has not always been the case in this central Wisconsin county in past years, but it appears that Adams County is approaching the new century with better employment opportunities. Jobs in health care, for example, will be increasing in years to come. Health care providers are among the largest in the county. As seen from the previous page, the rapid increase in the older population in Adams County will undoubtedly usher in changes in several industries—health and elder care being the chief among them.

The future for the labor force of Adams County is a fairly bright one, with new opportunities opening up in both manufacturing and the service sector in the years to come. But, in a sense, as far as work is concerned, Wood County to the north looms just over the horizon and many Adams residents commute each day to jobs there, especially in the mills. The uncertain future of paper manufacturing in Wood and Portage counties worries people in Adams County, as well.

Adams County Labor Force Age Population Distribution

Age Group	Population 1990 Census	Population 1999 Estimate	Percent change
0-15	2,966	3,251	9.6%
16-24	1,365	1,565	14.6%
25-39	3,515	3,465	-1.4%
40-54	2,732	4,068	48.9%
55-64	2,090	2,450	17.2%
65+	3,013	3,554	17.9%
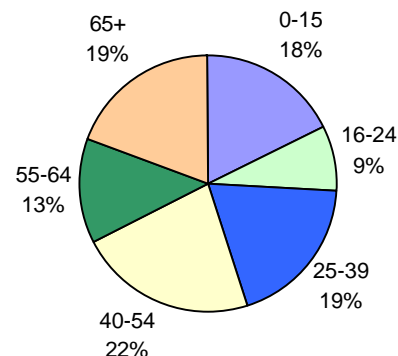
Source: Estimated from WI Dept of Admin, Demographic Services Center, *Official Population Projections 1990-2020* and US Census Bureau

65+ 19%
0-15 18%
16-24 9%
25-39 19%
40-54 22%
55-64 13%

Adams County Civilian Labor Force Data

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Labor Force	6,800	7,000	7,400	7,800	8,200	7,800
Employed	6,400	6,600	7,000	7,400	7,800	7,500
Unemployed	410	350	360	400	360	290
Unemployment Rate	6.1%	5.0%	4.9%	5.2%	4.4%	3.8%

Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

In Adams County, as in almost all other areas of the state, employment levels have risen somewhat faster than the labor force, resulting in a short supply of labor. Rates of unemployment have dropped steadily and compare well with levels of unemployment at the state level, as well as the national average.

Employment in Adams County has gone from just over 6,400 jobs in 1994, to about 7,800 in 1999. This is a good increase for an area the size of Adams County for a period of five years, but as can be seen below, it is probably as much a reflection of the general economic conditions of the central part of the state as of Adams.

Adams County compares well to neighboring areas as far as employment opportunities go, but the counties of Wood and Portage typically have more high paying manufacturing jobs, as well as nonprofessional types of jobs.

Unemployment Rate Comparison

Legend: ——◆—— United States   ——■—— Wisconsin   ——▲—— Adams County

Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Local Area Unemployment Statistics
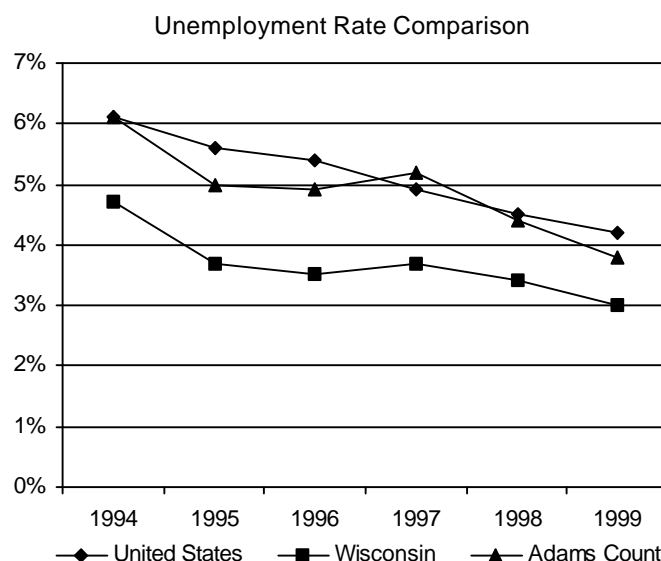
Commuting Pattern—(*Note - Although these 1990 Census Commuting numbers have not yet been updated by the recent Census, we do not anticipate any significant changes in the general pattern of movement.)* A look at the commuting patterns of Adams County workers reveals some interesting things not only about the county, but something about some of the contiguous areas, as well. About 4,800 people, or the majority of the workers in the county, work within the county itself. This is going to be true of nearly any area. What seems interesting is that such a significant percentage leave the area each day to work in other counties, or about a third of the Adams County workers. This occurs in several other counties of the state as well, and there are good reasons why people often drive great distances to a job.

Adams County Commuting Patterns

|	Commute Into	Commute From	Net Commute
Wood	699	119	-580
Marquette	325	71	-254
Portage	98	9	-89
Juneau	280	99	-181
Columbia	457	371	-86
Worked elsewhere	591	115	-476
Total	2,450	669	-1,781
Work within Adams County	4,768		

Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information. *Wisconsin's Commuting Patterns*, 1994.
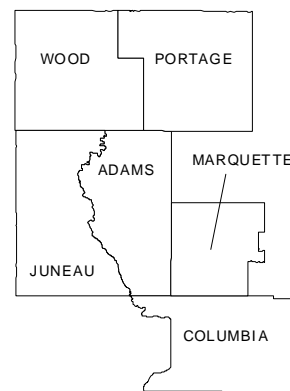
The largest number of workers travel north to Wood County, almost 700 total. Although it is nearly impossible to determine where these people work, it is probably safe to say it is either to a relatively good paying professional job, or perhaps to one of the manufacturing plants in the Wisconsin Rapids and Nekoosa areas. Several years ago, the Highway 13 corridor crossing the Wood-Adams County line was enlarged and re-paved for many miles in order to accommodate this twice-daily trek. Of course, Highway 13 is a major north-south line, but the bottleneck approaching the Nekoosa area was as much responsible for the improvements as the importance of the road itself.

Large numbers of people drive into Marquette and Columbia Counties, also to seek manufacturing and other higher paying jobs. The number of workers going as far as Portage County is rather small, compared to the number driving from Wood or Marathon Counties.

Adams County Employment Change by Industry 1994 to 1999
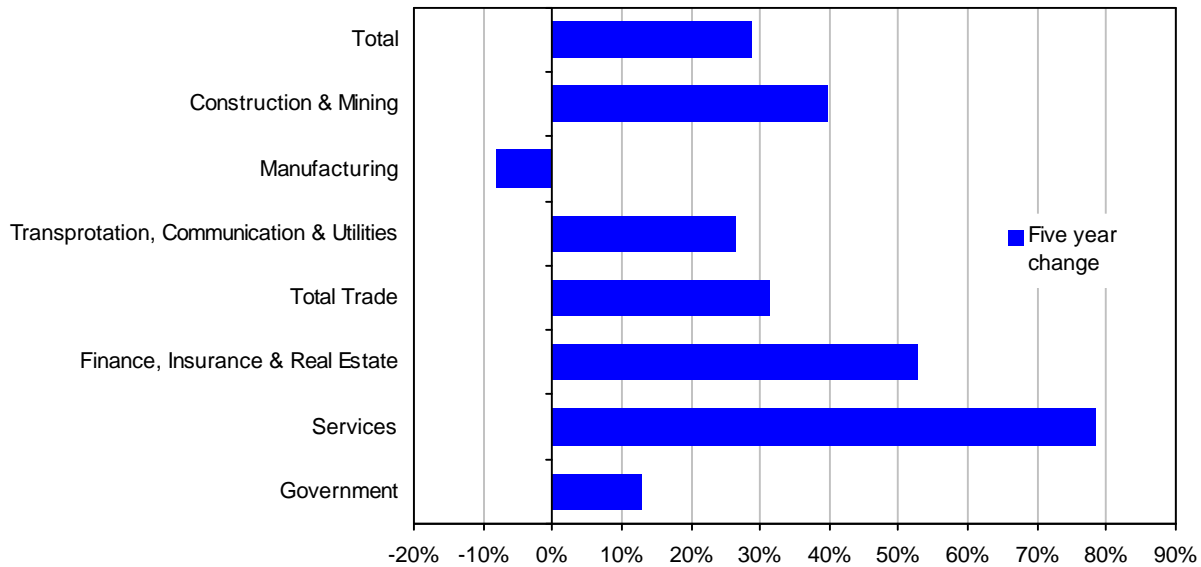
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Percent change 1 year	Percent change 5 year
Total	3,033	3,179	3,315	3,555	3,874	3,909	0.9%	28.9%
Goods Producing	565	577	588	618	632	570	-9.8%	0.9%
Construction & Mining	106	133	135	148	174	149	-14.5%	39.7%
Manufacturing	459	444	453	471	459	422	-8.0%	-8.0%
Durable	169	155	161	174	169	152	-9.6%	-9.9%
Nondurable	290	289	293	296	290	269	-7.1%	-7.0%
Service Producing	2,468	2,602	2,727	2,937	3,242	3,339	3.0%	35.3%
Transportation, Communications & Utilities	130	134	140	145	155	164	5.7%	26.6%
Total Trade	642	681	680	694	751	845	12.5%	31.5%
Wholesale	98	91	77	73	75	96	27.3%	-2.0%
Retail	544	590	603	621	676	749	10.8%	37.6%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	55	59	56	63	82	84	2.3%	52.7%
Services & Misc.	602	681	766	947	1,105	1,073	-2.9%	78.4%
Total Government	1,040	1,047	1,085	1,088	1,148	1,173	2.2%	12.9%

Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Nonfarm Wage & Salary estimates.

Nonfarm wage and salary employment measures the number of jobs within a county excluding agricultural, military, and self-employed workers. This data measures the number of jobs within the county without consideration of where the job-holder lives. Thus, this information is often referred to as "place of work" data.

There are many elements, or industries, in the Adams County labor market. In terms of employment numbers, total trade employs the largest number, an average of about 850 jobs in 1999. The greatest number of jobs in the trade sector are in retail trade, with a much smaller number in wholesale trade. This higher percentage of jobs in retail than wholesale is the same in all the River District counties, not just Adams. This is because retail establishment are smaller and more numerous than larger wholesale sites, which usually store and distribute large volumes of goods of all kinds.

Manufacturing is not a large portion of the Adams County industrial landscape, compared to such areas as Wood, Portage, or Marathon Counties. However, many county residents leave the county each day to work at manufacturing jobs elsewhere, mainly in Wood County to the north.

Adams County's Largest Industries and Employers

Top 10 Industry Groups

Industry Group	March 2000		Numerical Change	
	Employers	Employment	1 Year	5 Years
Justice, Public Order, And Safety	*	*	*	*
Educational Services	*	*	*	*
Health Services	9	327	0	1
Paper And Allied Products	*	*	*	*
Eating And Drinking Places	33	236	-9	-1
Hotels And Other Lodging Places	*	*	*	*
Automotive Dealers & Service Stations	17	133	-7	65
Electric, Gas, And Sanitary Services	5	130	8	32
Executive, Legislative, And General	14	126	-6	-44
Food Stores	*	*	*	*

*data suppressed to maintain confidentiality

Top 10 Employers

Company	Product or Service	Size
Consolidated Papers	Paper Manufacturer	250-499
Chula Vista Resort	Recreation	100-249
Adams County memorial Hospital	Health Care Provider	100-249
Villa Pines	Health Care Provider	100-249
Adams-Columbia Elec. Coop	Electrical Utility	50-99
Terrace Homes	Prefabricated Buildings	50-99
Potato World	Food processing	50-99
Spencer IGA	Retail Foods	50-99
Bob's K Market	Retail Foods	20-49
Farmers Union Coop	Farm Services	20-49

Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information Bureau, ES-202 file tape, 1st quarter 1999 and LMI benchmark 2000.

Top Ten Employers Share of Nonfarm Employment

All Others 74%
Top 10 Private 26%
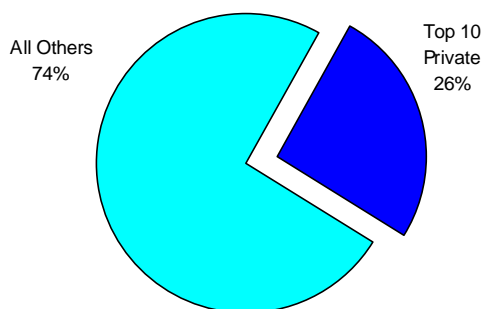
Top 10 Industry Groups Share of Nonfarm Employment

All Other Industries 41%
Top Ten Industries 59%
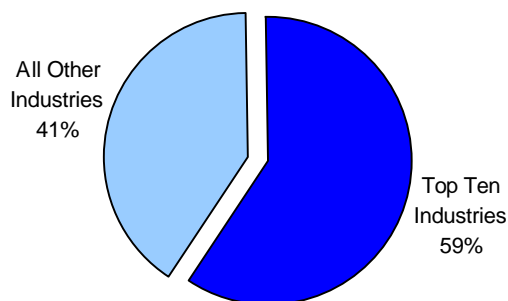
Most of the private sector employees in the Adams County area employ fewer than 80-100 people at each site. There are few large employers with employment levels of 200 or 300 people, as there are in areas like Wood or Portage counties. Additionally, Adams County is largely a rural area with agriculture, especially vegetable growing, playing an important role in this county.

The larger industries in Adams County are in the manufacturing and health care sector. Health care accounts for about 400 jobs in the area, which is a somewhat higher number than is usually found in a rural county the size of Adams. Many of these jobs are in residential and nursing home care, a fact that probably lends credence to the notion that Adams County is a retirement destination.

In the Government sector, the two largest employers in Adams County are Adams-Friendship public schools, and the Department of Justice (Federal Prison)

Adams County Employment and Wages 1999

	Annual Average Wage	State Average Wage	Percent of State Average	Percent change 1 year	Percent change 5 year	Number of Workers
All Industries	$23,247	$29,609	78.5%	3.9%	12.8%	3,808
Agriculture, Forestry, & Fishing	$19,106	$21,499	88.9%	7.0%	30.0%	133
Mining	*	$39,968	*	*	*	*
Construction	$22,215	$36,772	60.4%	9.9%	19.6%	152
Manufacturing	$34,381	$37,773	91.0%	8.9%	17.3%	446
Transportation, Communications, & Utilities	$25,558	$34,523	74.0%	-14.5%	-7.9%	173
Wholesale Trade	$28,332	$38,048	74.5%	-2.5%	50.7%	96
Retail Trade	$11,668	$15,066	77.4%	4.6%	26.5%	714
Finance, Insurance, & Real estate	$17,371	$37,911	45.8%	0.4%	6.6%	89
Services	$17,017	$26,041	65.3%	3.4%	15.4%	846
Total Government	$31,285	$32,017	97.7%	3.9%	15.2%	1,082

Total Employment and Wage Distribution by Industry Division
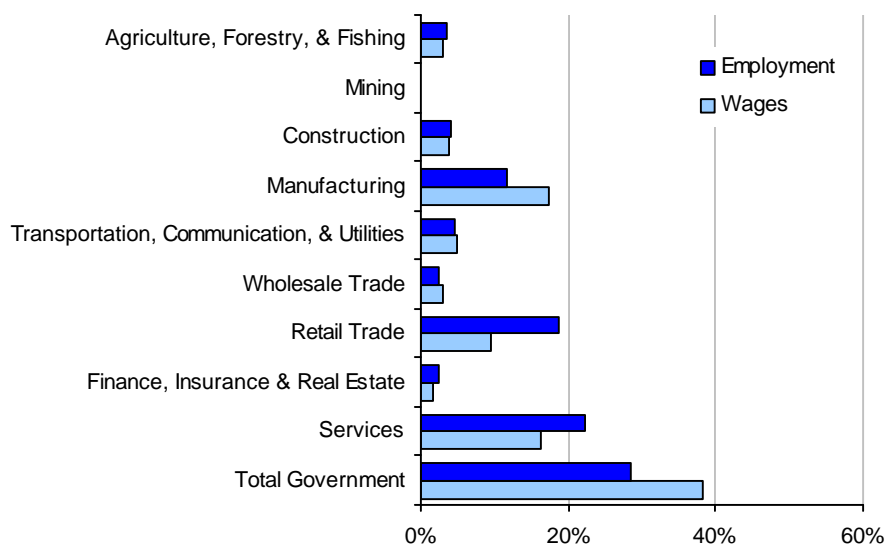
Annual average wages for workers in Adams County in 1999 were just over $23,200 per year. This compares well with neighboring areas but is only about 22 percent below the state average. In Adams County, as in every other county of the state, earnings vary greatly between different industries. The top end industries may differ in some counties, but generally speaking, those industrial sectors containing the largest number of professional or union workers will be on the upper end of the income scale.

In Adams County, as in so many other places, the manufacturing sector shows the greatest average annual wage. This industry is not the largest numerically, but it contains businesses with a more highly organized workforce.

The three largest elements of the industrial landscape in Adams County are government employment, retail trade and service. Excepting the first, these industries contain some of the lowest paying occupations in the Wisconsin labor market. That pattern is generally due to more part time jobs than other industries, plus more entry level jobs. Employment in the service sector in Adams County is increasingly in retirement centers and nursing homes, as this area of the state continues to attract more retirees.

Adams County Wage and Income Data

Per Capita Personal Income 1999

United States	$28,546
Wisconsin	$27,370
Adams County	$18,606
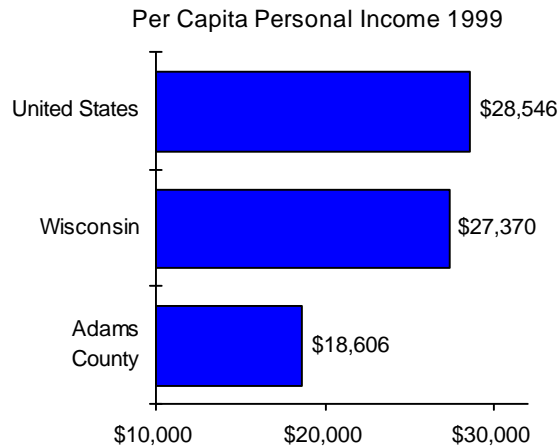
Per capita income is total income divided by the total number of residents. Income includes wages earned, dividends from investments, and transfer payments from the government. Adams County's per capita income ranked one of the last of Wisconsin's 72 counties during 1999.

Per capita income can be influenced by the number of wage earners, average family size, and the median age of the residents. Per capita income can influence the type of services and housing available within a county.

Over the past six years, Adams County per capita income has increased by about $4,000 and wages earned in Adams County have increased by about 16 percent. (This is not as much as the period of 1990 - 1995, when the increase was about 18 - 19 percent.) The wide difference between these two levels is due to various types of non-wage income, benefits, and payments not related to earned wages.
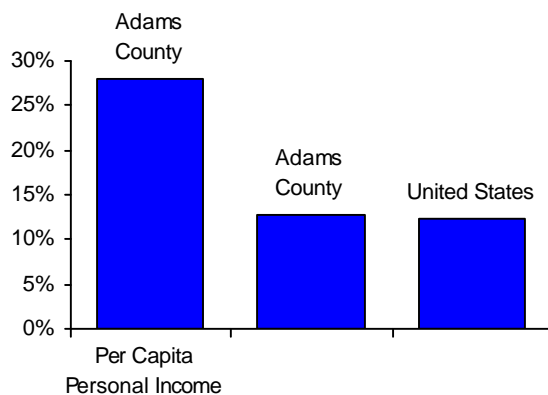
Per Capita Personal Income

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Percent Change 1 year	Percent Change 5 year
United States	$22,581	$23,562	$24,651	$25,874	$27,321	$28,546	4.5%	26.4%
Wisconsin	$21,699	$22,573	$23,554	$24,791	$26,227	$27,370	4.4%	26.1%
Adams County	$14,527	$15,318	$16,226	$17,248	$17,872	$18,606	4.1%	28.1%

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System.

Selected Occupational Wage Data

	Mean	Median
Administrative Secretary	$13.20	$14.00
Assembler	$9.14	$8.63
Cooks, Short Order	$6.84	$6.46
Driver/Sales Workers	$10.29	$10.73
Janitors & Cleaners	$7.91	$7.30
Carpenters Helper	$8.75	$8.25
Welders & Cutters	$12.99	$13.05
Nurse Aide	$8.94	$9.16
Construction Carpenter	$11.47	$11.15
Food Preparation Workers	$6.65	$6.14
General Office Clerk	$8.82	$8.59
Licensed Practical Nurse	$13.03	$12.94
Salesperson, Retail	$8.59	$6.88
Recreation Workers	$8.50	$9.10

Source: WI DWD, BWI. 1998 OES Wage Survey, Wausau, WI

Wages paid for work within a county can impact the type of goods and services which may be purchased. Examining wage structures can be an important part of the hiring process for both job seekers and employers. The mean wage is the sum of all wages divided by the number of wage earners; this is often referred to as an "average". The median wage is the midpoint of all wages; there are exactly the same number of wage earners above and below this wage. If the mean and median are relatively close the labor market for that particular worker is probably tight or very competitive.

Wages in Adams County, especially in the trade, service, and manufacturing sectors, will not compare well to most of the occupations listed at left (from the River District survey, all counties). In fact, pay levels near minimum are not uncommon for entry-level and low skill occupations.